

# Commission for Women

Volume 41

Newsletter of the Montgomery County Commission for Women

March 2003

## COMMISSIONERS

Anne Sanderoff Walker  
*President*  
Regina Borkoski  
Patricia Cornish  
Jodi Finkelstein  
Jodi Grant  
Carol Lynn Green  
Laura Henderson  
Kevin G. Hessler  
Deborah L. Horan  
Shirley L. Johnson  
Shelia C. Parker  
Gary P. Smith  
Evelyne Steward  
Yun Jung Yang  
Barbara Zelenko

## STAFF

*Executive Director's Office*  
Judith Vaughan-Prather  
*Executive Director*  
Clotilde Puertolas  
*Program Specialist*  
Paula Rodgers  
*Administrative Specialist*  
Tracy Stuger  
*Editor, Legislative & Budget Specialist*  
*Counseling & Career Center*  
Elma Rambo  
*Program Manager*  
Janice Herold  
*Counseling Supervisor*  
Susie Carpio  
*Volunteer Coordinator/Hispanic Outreach*  
Susan Koenig  
*Registrar*  
Alyssa Philipp  
*Supervisor, Intake & Referral Services*  
Carol Steadman  
*Job Development Coordinator*



## Commission Pays Tribute to 30 Historical Women

In honor of its 30 years of service and to fill a gap in information available on the history of Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Commission for Women created an on-line archive (The Montgomery County Women's History Archive, [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw)), featuring the biographies of 30 women of historical significance to the county. In addition, a quilt (The Montgomery County Women's History Quilt) was created by Commission President Anne Sanderoff Walker, a professional fiber artist, and permanently installed in the offices of the Commission's Counseling and Career Center. The quilt is composed of 33 squares, one for each of the 30 women included in the archives, and three depicting the history of the organization. The women selected include the famous (Clara Barton, Rachel Carson, Goldie Hawn), and those whose accomplishments, while extraordinary, have gone largely unpublished or are long-forgotten, including women born into slavery, and those entering professions or positions never before occupied by women. The archive will be an evolving resource to students of women's and/or county history, as more women will be added as their biographies are developed.

Because the Commission for Women was celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002, it was decided that the initial archive would include 30 women who have lived a significant part of their lives in Montgomery County, have made significant contributions to their fields, were "first women" in their profession, or have contributed significantly to the betterment of our community. Considerable research was required to establish the list of 30 women, and then to develop succinct biographies of each one's life. Photographs were obtained whenever possible, to accompany the biography. Each biography also includes reference resources, including links to other relevant sites on the internet. (continued on page 2)

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH ISSUE

President's Message .....	page 2
Judith McHale, President/C.O.O. of Discovery Communications Receives CFW Trailblazer Award.....	page 6
Support the Short-Term Disability for Working Families.....	page 7



## ***President's Message***

*By Anne Sanderoff-Walker*

---

Change is beautiful, exhilarating, scary, and inevitable. As the seasons change we are reminded of the colors of the trees that lay hidden all summer and when these colors soften and fade, we see the fascinating structures of the plant life underneath. And as we watch the snow fall and soften all of the hard edges, we are cheered by the knowledge that spring will eventually follow. The exhilaration that comes from a career change can produce the stomach wrenching we feel when on a roller coaster. As the government changes with each election, we wonder what changes will come about. And hopefully, the recognition that change is coming whether we are ready or not, teaches us flexibility.

A woman, on average, will have 4-6 careers during her lifetime.

Many women interrupt their early careers to start a family, or their later careers to care for elderly parents. After time in the corporate world, many women start their own businesses to give them more flexibility to balance work and family. And as the business community continues to recognize the importance of family friendly policies, the "work-life" balancing act becomes easier. But there is still much work to be done in this arena.

Some of these issues of family friendly policies can be addressed legislatively. With the changes brought about by last November's mid-term elections, we are presented with the opportunity to meet some newly elected officials and strengthen relationships with old friends and colleagues. These opportunities allow us to keep open the lines of communication, better enabling us to voice our concerns for the needs of the women in our community. One of the issues we will work on legislatively is for the provision of paid leave for family and medical care.

And speaking of change, the Commission for Women has moved. Even with all of the changes that have occurred, it was with great effort on the part of the staff of the Commission for Women that the services provided by the Career and Counseling Center were not interrupted for more than a few days. With change happening all around, it is comforting to know that the Commission for Women is there to continue the work we have come to depend upon. And that the seasons will change once again.

---

*(continued from page 1)*

### **Commission Pays Tribute to 30 Historical Women**

In addition to the creation of the quilt and archive, it was decided to name each of the three new classrooms in the Counseling and Career Center after one of the women in the archive. The Center is visited by thousands of customers each year. It is hoped that the prominent display of the quilt and the naming of the rooms will help to instill an awareness of great women's admirable accomplishments.

Strenuous efforts were made to ensure that those included in the archive and quilt reflect the diversity of women in Montgomery County in every respect, including race, ethnicity, and field of endeavor (government, law, science, arts, military, athletics, education, civil and human rights, medicine, public safety, business). The first 30 women included in the archive are:

- **Clara Barton:** founder of the American Red Cross and the National First Aid Society, teacher, women's suffrage advocate, Civil War nurse, and pioneering humanitarian;
- **Rosalyn B. Bell:** first woman to serve on the county's District Court, second woman ever appointed to the Maryland Court of Special Appeals;
- **Marielsa Bernard:** the first judge of Hispanic descent in the history of the county
- **Lillian B. Brown:** Author, community activist, educator, historian, principal and teacher;

- **Rachel L. Carson:** biologist, writer, scientist, ecologist; considered the mother of the modern environmental movement, author of *Silent Spring*;
- **Nina H. Clarke:** Author, community activist, educator, historian, principal and teacher, first African-American supervisory resource teacher in the integrated county school system;
- **Rita C. Davidson:** first woman Cabinet Secretary in Maryland's history; first woman judge on the Maryland Court of Special Appeals; first woman judge on the Maryland Court of Appeals;
- **Dominique Dawes:** first African-American on the U.S. women's gymnastic team; first African-American female gymnast to win an individual Olympic gymnastic medal
- **Katherine Lawyer Shook DuFour:** first Maryland woman to serve as a Circuit Court Judge;
- **Emily C. Edmonson:** abolitionist who worked with Frederick Douglass, and whose failed attempt to escape slavery caught the attention of Harriett Beecher Stowe, and increased the public will to end slavery in the United States;
- **Lavinia Margaret Engle:** first county woman elected to Maryland House of Delegates; first woman to serve on the County Board of Commissioners;
- **Lillian Elaine Fishburne:** first African-American woman to reach the rank of Rear Admiral in the U.S. Navy;
- **Goldie Hawn:** world renowned actress, comedienne, producer of films;
- **Dorothy S. Himstead:** first woman to serve on the County Council;
- **Lauretta Kress:** first woman physician and surgeon to practice in Montgomery County;
- **Rose Kushner:** journalist, author, breast cancer expert, and patient advocate, pioneered widespread use of breast self-examination, and the now established protocol of two-step breast cancer treatment, so that biopsy is not followed by surgery until the patient has been advised of the nature of her condition and all the treatment options;
- **Lucille S. Maurer:** first woman elected to the position of Treasurer for the state of Maryland, first woman to serve on Maryland's highest administrative council, the Board of Public Works;
- **Carol A. Mehrling:** first woman Chief of Police in the county, at that time the largest police department in the U.S. to be headed by a woman;
- **Mary Beth Michos:** first woman uniformed officer and Emergency Medical Services Officer in the County (currently, Chief of the Prince William County, VA, Department of Fire and Rescue);
- **Constance A. Morella:** first county woman elected to the U.S. Congress;
- **Charlene R. Nunley:** first woman President of Montgomery Community College;
- **Irma Raker:** first woman prosecutor in the county, second woman judge on the District Court for the county, third woman judge on the Circuit Court for Montgomery County;
- **Myra Pollack Sadker:** educator, researcher, author, professor, internationally known advocate for educational equity, conducted ground breaking research on gender equity in education;
- **Elizabeth L. Scull:** outspoken advocate for housing for the poor;
- **Odessa Shannon:** first African-American woman elected to a policy-making political position in Montgomery County, first African-American woman to serve on the county Board of Education, first woman Special Assistant to the County Executive;
- **Vivian V. Simpson:** first woman lawyer in the county, first woman elected President of the county Bar Association, first woman Secretary of State for Maryland;
- **Edith Throckmorton:** civil rights and community leader, educator, teacher, principal, President of the Montgomery County Chapter of the NAACP for 16 years;
- **Lucy Wright Trundle:** first woman member of the county Board of Education;
- **Stella B. Werner:** first woman president of the County Council, first woman in Maryland to be named President of a county governing body;
- **Jeannette Lee White:** business owner entrepreneur, founder, president and CEO of an award winning information technology company earning the national Entrepreneurial Excellence Award from *Working Woman Magazine* in 2000.

Both the archive and the quilt received considerable attention from the media, including reports in *The Washington Post* newspaper, local papers, and National Public Radio (NPR). Almost 150 people attended the event launching the archive "web site" and unveiling the quilt.

## **30 Years Of Service, Advocacy and Progress**

On December 9, 2002, over 150 people joined the Commission for Women as it celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with the Grand Opening of its new offices, and the unveiling of a special women's history quilt. The quilt, hand-made by the Commission's president, Anne Sanderoff-Walker, commemorates the lives of 30 women of historical significance to Montgomery County. In addition, a new website was launched, with archival information on each of these women's lives, contributions and achievements.

The Montgomery County Commission for Women is a 15-member advisory board and a department of Montgomery County Government. Its members are residents of the county who each serve three year terms without compensation. The Commission was established by County law enacted on June 7, 1972 and is charged with the responsibility of advising the County Executive, the County Council, the public, and the agencies of the county, state and federal governments on the issues of concern to women. Its mission is to identify areas of law, policy, practice and procedure with disparate impact on women, and to advocate remedies that will ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender.

In addition, the department operates a Counseling and Career Center providing individual, couples and career counseling; support groups, workshops and classes on a wide range of issues; information and referral, legal call back services and professional training for counselors and social workers. The Counseling Center staff, complemented by a corps of dedicated, trained and experienced volunteers, provides services to thousands of county residents each year.

Over its thirty years of advocacy, the Commission has undertaken major projects addressing such issues as educational equity, employment discrimination, sexual harassment at work and in the schools, work-life issues and family-friendly employment policies, fair pay practices, immigrant women's issues, child support and other family law concerns, domestic violence and other violent crimes against

women, women's history, the current status of women in Montgomery County, and the gender gap in technology education and careers. Each year, for 23 years, the Commission sponsored the Women's Legislative Briefing regularly attended by 500 women and men from all across the state. For the past six years, the Commission has sponsored the county government's Take Our Daughters to Work Day, offering inspiration toward a wide range of careers to over 300 children annually. For the past four years, the Commission has worked with the Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery College to offer a special summer camp in information technology to encourage middle school girls to pursue this field of study. The Commission has also provided scholarships to this camp for girls of low income and girls for whom English is a second language.

In October 2002, the Commission for Women and the Counseling and Career Center moved to brand new quarters at 401 North Washington Street - Suite 100, in Rockville Maryland. The beautiful new offices provide more classrooms, more and better counseling facilities, and up-to-

## **Council of Leaders Meeting Rescheduled to March 5**

Several times throughout the year, the Montgomery County Commission for Women convenes a Presidents' Council Meeting, a special meeting of the leaders of Montgomery County women's organizations to share agendas and priorities, discuss common concerns and develop strategies for promoting women's well-being.

On Wednesday, March 5th, the Council of Leaders Meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Seven Seas Restaurant 1776 East Jefferson Street, Rockville, Maryland (In the rear of the Federal Plaza Shopping Center on Rockville Pike).

The special guest speaker Alyson Reed, Executive Director of the Maryland Commission for Women, will be the featured speaker and will address what the new census data reveals about the status of women in Maryland. Please let us know of your plans to attend by calling Paula Rodgers at 240-777-8330, or by emailing her at [paula.rogers@co.mo.md.us](mailto:paula.rogers@co.mo.md.us)

## Women's History Month

Even as recently as the 1970s, women's history was virtually an unknown topic in the K-12 curriculum or in general public consciousness. To address this situation, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County, California Commission on the Status of Women initiated a "Women's History Week" celebration for 1978. The week of March 8 was chosen to make International Women's Day the focal point of the observance. The activities that were held met with enthusiastic response, and within a few years, dozens of schools participated in an annual "Real Woman" essay contest that drew hundreds of entries. In addition, a marvelous annual parade and program was held in downtown Santa Rosa, CA.

In 1979, Molly MacGregor, then director of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, was invited to participate in a Women's History Institute at Sarah Lawrence College, attended by the national leadership of organizations for women and girls. When MacGregor told the other participants about their county-wide Women's History Week celebration, these leaders decided to initiate similar celebrations within their own organizations and school districts. They also agreed to secure an official Congressional Resolution declaring a "National Women's History Week." In 1981, Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) co-sponsored the first such Joint Congressional Resolution.

The popularity of women's history celebrations has sparked a new interest in uncovering women's forgotten heritage. Many states and cities have instituted a "Women's Hall of Fame," or have published biographical materials about prominent women in the history of their particular locale. In many areas, state historical societies, women's organizations and groups such as the Girls Scouts have worked together to develop joint National Women's History Month programs.

The efforts of educators, workplace program planners, parents and community organizations in thousands of American communities have turned National Women's History Month into a major celebration, and a springboard for celebrating women's history all year.

## Equal Pay Day - April 15, 2003

*Tracy Stuger*

Equal Pay Day will be commemorated this year on April 15, 2003. This national observance, sponsored each year by the National Committee on Pay Equity, symbolizes the day into the new year that an American woman must work to equal the wages paid to a man in the previous year.

Although the Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits unequal pay for equal or "substantially equal" work performed by men and women, women continue to earn substantially less than their male counterparts. In addition, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits wage discrimination on the basis of sex. However, after thirty years, significant disparities still exist.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 1997 women's weekly earnings were 74 percent of men's weekly earnings. In addition, women of color earned substantially less than white males, with African American women earning only 63 percent and Hispanic women earning only 54 percent of the salary of white males.

Pay equity enhances women's economic status, and serves as an equalizer and neutralizer in the workforce. By ending gender-based discriminatory pay practices, pay equity will contribute to fairer and more productive work environment.

Over 500 groups throughout the nation will participate in Equal Pay Day activities in their hometowns. Some of the scheduled activities include press conferences, rallies, forums, lobbying efforts and "new year's day" celebrations.

For more information on Equal Pay Day, and what you or your organization can do to help, contact the National Committee on Pay Equity at 202-637-5232 or visit [www.feminist.com/fairpay](http://www.feminist.com/fairpay).

This year the Maryland General Assembly is considering legislation that would establish a commission to study pay equity issues in Maryland and would strengthen existing legislation by permitting damages to be awarded to plaintiffs. Senate Bill 250 and House Bill 698, the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act had its first hearing on February 11, 2003 and is currently in the Senate Finance and House Economic Matters committees.

## Discovery's Judith McHale Receives Trailblazer Award

Tracy Stuger

---

Over 500 Montgomery County employers and employees gathered on February 13, 2003 at the University of Maryland's University Center Conference Center to honor those companies in Montgomery County that have taken strides to be "excellent places to work." The "Excellent Place to Work" program, an initiative of the Chamber Workforce Corporation and the Montgomery Work/Life Alliance, honors those employers in Montgomery County who have demonstrated effective employee work/life programs and policies.

As one of the founding members of the Work/Life Alliance, the Commission for Women has established an annual award, recognizing a Work/Life Excellence award winner that has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to equal opportunity and to the advancement of women within its organization. This year's recipient was Judith McHale, President and Chief Operating Officer of Discovery Communications, Inc.

Under Ms. McHale's leadership, Discovery has grown from its core property - the Discovery Channel - to become the leading global real-world media and entertainment company. Discovery Communications, Incorporated now operates in more than 155 countries and territories reaching over 830 million total subscribers. In 1999, she created the company's work/life initiative resulting in Discovery's selection as one of the 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers by *Working Mother* magazine for three consecutive years. But, it is not only for her commitment to Work Life Balance that she was honored with the Trailblazer Award. She has also launched the Women's Leadership Initiative to create and maintain a supportive and flexible work culture that enables women to contribute to their full potential. Under her leadership, women are 64 percent of all the employees at Discovery, and 50 percent of all the executives at Discovery.

This is the third year the Commission for Women has presented its Trailblazer Award. Last year's recipient was Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan.

## Key Legislative Initiatives Discussed at the Women's Legislative Briefing

Tracy Stuger

---

On February 2, 2003, hundreds of people from throughout the state of Maryland attended the Women's Legislative Briefing at the 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase. Paid parental leave, domestic violence, and effective lobbying were among the many issues discussed at the briefing. This was the 23rd year in which the Montgomery County Commission for Women, in collaboration with a host of prominent women's and community organizations throughout the state, has sponsored the event. Over the past two decades, the briefing has served as a forum for legislators, community advocates, experts and interested citizens.

Dr. Jane Smith, President and CEO of Business and Professional Women/USA delivered an inspiring keynote address stressing the importance of continued advocacy on behalf of women's issues. This year's program also included a special plenary session led by Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Dr. Martha Burk, Chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations. Both panelists provided tremendous insight on important issues facing women at the national level. Among the many issues discussed were upcoming judicial appointments, Title IX and reproductive rights. Patricia Cornish, Chair of the 2003 Women's Legislative Briefing, served as Mistress of Ceremonies during the opening program and plenary session. The opening included a welcome by Montgomery County Executive Douglas Duncan.

The opening ceremonies were followed by a series of workshops: *Keeping Women Safe and Healthy*, *Keeping Our Families Strong*, *Making Work and Women Work*, *Understanding the Budget and Legislative Process*, and *Protecting Our Sisters-International Women's Issues*. In each workshop, a panel of experts including legislators and community leaders led the audience in an informed discussion about policy affecting women.

The Keeping Our Families Strong workshop was moderated by Dr. Jacqueline Reed of the Prince George's County Commission for Women. Panelists for this workshop were State Senator Jennie Forehand, Delegate Susan Lee and Dorothy Fait, Co-Chair of the Montgomery County Executive's Spousal Abuse Task Force.

The Keeping Women Safe and Healthy Workshop addressed several legislative initiatives including domestic violence and rape shield law legislation. Panelists included State Senator Lisa Gladden, Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez, Cynthia Golomb, Legislative Counsel for the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, and Wendy Royalty, Vice President of Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood of Maryland. Michael Cohen, Executive Director of the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence served as the moderator for this session.

Panelists for the workshop entitled Making Work and Women Work included Senator Sharon Grosfeld, Lissa Bell of the National Partnership for Women and Families and Heather Gomes of the University of Maryland School of Law. They discussed issues regarding paid parental leave, pay equity, and unemployment benefits for part-time employees. This session was moderated by Alyson Reed, Executive Director of the Maryland Commission for Women.

Understanding the Budget and the Legislative Process provided audience members with insight on the most effective methods for making one's voice heard by our lawmakers. Moderated by Luisa Heredia-Sauseda of the Maryland Commission for Women, the panel included presentations by Delegate Joanne Benson, Delegate Jean Cryor, and Mindy Binderman and Ann Ciekot of Binderman and Ciekot, LLP.

Protecting Our Sisters - International Women's Issues examined some of the issues affecting women globally. Among the topics discussed were trafficking of women, domestic servitude and the plight of women in Afghanistan. Experts in the field of international women's issues for this session included Norma Gattsek of the Feminist Majority Foundation, Theresa Loar of the Vital Voice Global Partnership.

The Women's Legislative Briefing 2003 was cosponsored by 62 organizations including the Commissions for Women of Baltimore County, Charles County, Frederick County, Howard County,

Prince George's County, and the State of Maryland. The event was organized with the help and expertise of volunteers representing the commissions and organizations of these jurisdictions. The use of the 4-H Conference Center was made possible by the NIH's Office of Community Liaison. Discovery Communications, Inc. provided financial support for the event.

---

## Short-Term Disability for Working Families Act

In the 2003 session of the Maryland General Assembly, the top legislative priority for the Commission for Women will be to secure paid medical and family leave to better protect Maryland workers through the passage of the Short-Term Disability for Working Families Act.

Senator Sharon Grosfeld is the chief sponsor of this legislation in the Senate, and Delegate Adrienne Mandel is the chief sponsor in the House. The Maryland Legislators Women's Caucus has made the bill one of its priorities. The Women's Law Center of Maryland and the Maryland Business and Professional Women's Organization (BPW) have endorsed the bill, and it has been included on the 2003 Legislative Agenda for Maryland Women. The National Partnership for Women and Families is providing expert guidance and strategy, and drafted the bill, based on similar legislation in Washington state and California.

STDWFA provides for payment of a portion of an employee's salary while he or she is required to be absent due to family or medical leave; it covers a maximum 12 weeks of paid leave annually. Benefits are set at a capped percentage of an employee's salary. In order to be eligible, an employee must be temporarily unable to work due to his or her own serious illness or his or her need to provide care: (1) to a newborn, newly adopted or newly placed foster child, or (2) to a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent.

STDWFA establishes a State of Maryland account to cover both the costs of the short-term leave and the administrative expenses incurred by the State in setting up and managing the account. The account is to be funded jointly by contributions from employers and employees and administered by the State.



This legislation is intended to provide a safety-net for men and women who are now forced to make the choice between taking leave without pay, risking job loss, and severe financial repercussions and not caring for a seriously ill loved one.

An employer may require an employee to take up to two weeks of vacation leave prior to the receipt of STDWFA benefits. Safeguards are built into the legislation to protect against fraud or abuse, including requiring that the employee provide advance notice to an employer and certification by a health care worker.

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), enacted in 1993, requires employers to provide employees up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave per year at the time of birth or adoption, or to care for a parent, spouse, child's or their own serious medical condition. During such leave periods, the employer continues its share of the employee's health coverage. The employee is guaranteed the same or equivalent job and benefits upon return from leave. The federal FMLA applies only to employees at worksites of 50 or more persons, and only provides for unpaid leave.

#### The Need For Paid Leave

- 78% of ELIGIBLE employees who needed but did not take family or medical leave did not take it because they could not afford to.
- 34% of the men and women who take FMLA take it without pay.
- Nearly 10% of leave-takers receiving less than full pay during their longest leave have to go on public assistance to cover lost wages.
- The employment benefits of paid family leave (i.e. a rise in employee retention and productivity, company loyalty, and health care savings) also translate as better business for employers. In 1996, for example, the

Commission on Family Leave found that 94 percent of employees who take fully paid leave return to their same employer, as compared to 76 percent of employees who received only unpaid leave. Organizations struggling to weather the economic downturn will have a bottom-line interest in maintaining a stable workforce and retaining experienced employees in whom they have already invested.

- A University of Chicago study of California's newly enacted family leave law estimates up to \$89 million per year in savings to California businesses.
- The same study estimates up to \$23 million per year in savings to the state.
- EVERY major developed country in the world except the United States and Australia provides paid parental leave.
- Australia is expected to hold hearings on legislation to provide 14 weeks of paid parental leave this fall. And the average length of parental leave in OECD countries is ten months.
- Public support for paid leave is overwhelming. A recent national poll found that 88% of parents and 80% of all adults support paid parental leave.

*The position expressed in this document is that of the Montgomery County Commission for Women and does not necessarily reflect the position of the County Executive or any other branch of the County Government. For more information, please call the Montgomery County Commission at 240-777-8330.*



# Short-Term Disability for Working Families Act (SB 543/HB 818) I CAN HELP!!!

The Montgomery County Commission for Women, the Women's Law Center of Maryland, BPW Maryland, AAUW Maryland, the Maryland Women Legislators' Caucus, and the Legislative Agenda for Maryland Women are working together to secure passage of the paid leave bill in the 2003 Maryland General Assembly

We need your help! If you can work with us to help get this bill passed, please indicate below how you can help!

- \_\_\_\_ 1. I can ask Maryland House and Senate legislators to **co-sponsor** the paid leave bill.  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 2. I can help with **outreach** by asking:  
\_\_\_\_ My organization to endorse and to participate more actively  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Other organizations or key players to endorse and contribute  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Employers and employer associations to endorse the proposal  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_ 3. I can **testify** or locate someone who will testify at a legislative hearing in Annapolis.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. I can identify and work with **citizens with stories** to tell.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. I will contact the **media** by writing letters to editor or op-ed pieces.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. I will **volunteer** my time to help support the bill by writing, mailing, outreach, etc.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. I have other **special expertise or capabilities** to offer. What? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Your Name (please print)

Date

---

Name of Organization

Position within Organization

# of Members

---

Your Street Address

---

City

(County)

State

Zip

---

Phone (H)

Phone (O)

Fax

E-mail

---

Best way to contact you:

\_\_\_ E-mail

\_\_\_ Fax

\_\_\_ Phone

Please return this form to:

Montgomery County Commission for Women  
401 North Washington Street - Suite 100  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Fax: 301-279-1318

*If you need more information, please call 240-777-8330*

## **District Court Commissioners Allowed to Issue Protective Orders**

---

*Jodi Finkelstein*

---

Effective December 18, 2002 victims of domestic violence no longer have to wait for the courts to be open in order to seek a protective order. In an historic vote on November 5, 2002, 1,223,425 Marylanders voted in favor of Ballot Question One: District Court Commissioners: Powers and Duties to Issue Interim Peace and Protective Orders. As part of their duties, Commissioners will now have the ability to issue interim peace and protective orders when the courts are closed. These orders will provide victims of domestic violence up to 48 hours of limited assistance until he/she is able to seek additional relief when the courts reopen the next business day.

Prior to the passage of this amendment, victims could only seek civil orders of protection when the courts were open. Waiting for the courts to open to get protection from abuse can be dangerous and even deadly. According to the 2000 Maryland Uniform Crime Report, 68% of domestic violence assaults or 13,616 incidents, occurred when the courts were closed. In 2001 alone, domestic violence killed 68 Maryland men, women, and children.

Victims will now have several options of protection from which to choose:

### **1. Interim protective or peace order**

This order is only available from a court commissioner when the court is closed. An interim peace order is available to those who can not apply for a protective order. Relief through the interim order includes the following:

Interim Protective Order:	Interim Peace Order:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Refrain from threatening or committing abuse</li><li>■ End all contact with petitioner</li><li>■ Order the respondent to stay away from the petitioner's home, place of employment, school, or residence of any family member</li><li>■ If respondent and victim are living together, award temporary custody of children to petitioner if child abuse is alleged</li><li>■ If respondent and victim are living together, order respondent to vacate the home and award temporary use and possession of the home</li><li>■ In the case of a vulnerable adult, award temporary use and possession of the home to an adult living in the home</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Refrain from threatening or committing abuse</li><li>■ End all contact with victim</li><li>■ Order respondent to stay away from the victim's home, place of employment, or school</li></ul>

## 2. Temporary Peace or Protective Order

If the commissioner issues the interim order, the victim will return to court to participate in the second phase of the process called the temporary hearing. During this hearing, the victim may ask the judge for a temporary peace or protective order. The temporary order is available for seven days. The following relief is available under the temporary peace or protective order:

The temporary protective order is issued by a District or circuit court judge who can:

- Order the respondent to refrain from further abuse or threats of abuse
- Order the respondent to refrain from contacting, attempting to contact or harassing the petitioner
- If the petitioner and respondent live together at the time of abuse, order the respondent to vacate the home and give temporary use and possession of the home to petitioner or, if there is alleged child abuse or alleged abuse of a vulnerable adult, give temporary use and possession of the home to a non-spouse so long as petitioner has resided in the home for at least 90 days in the last year
- Order respondent to refrain from entering the residence of petitioner
- Order the respondent to stay away from place of employment, school, or temporary residence of petitioner and family members
- Order respondent to stay away from child care provider
- Award temporary custody of a child of petitioner and respondent

The temporary peace order is issued by a District Court judge who can:

- Order the respondent to refrain from committing or threatening to commit abuse
- Order respondent from contacting, attempting to contact or harassing the petitioner
- Order respondent to refrain from entering the residence of the petitioner
- Order the respondent to stay away from petitioner's place of employment, school or temporary residence

At the time of the temporary order hearing, the abuser has the right to be heard. Victims of domestic violence who chose to apply for an interim order and then move onto the temporary order, should contact a service providers as quickly as possible. The Montgomery County Abused Persons Program can be reached at (240) 777-4210. (TTY 240-777-4850)

Montgomery County Commission for Women  
401 N. Washington Street, Suite 100  
Rockville, MD 20850-1703  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw)

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Rockville MD  
Permit No. 138

*Call us at 240-777-8300 or visit our new website for more information  
On our services and workshops!*



**Wednesday, March 5, 2003, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - *Council of Leaders Meeting.*** Seven Seas Restaurant, 1776 East Jefferson Street in Rockville, Maryland, \$20. Featured speaker: Alyson Reed, Executive Director, Maryland Commission for Women. For more information call Paula Rodgers at 240-777-8330 or email [paula.rodgers@co.mo.md.us](mailto:paula.rodgers@co.mo.md.us).

**Saturday, March 8, 2003, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - *Voices: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Women Still Speak Today.*** Smithsonian, National Postal Museum. For more information call 202-357-2991 or visit [www.si.edu/postal](http://www.si.edu/postal).

**Saturday, March 8, 2003. *International Women's Day.*** Further information is available online at <http://www.nwhp.org/events/iwd/iwd.html>

**Thursday, March 13, 2003, 9:30 a.m. - *Women Who Shaped American History: Honoring Patricia Roberts Harris, A Woman Pioneer.*** General Federation of Women's Clubs Headquarters, 1734 N Street, NW, Washington, DC. For more information contact Suzanne Gould at 202-347-3168 or email [whrc@gfwc.org](mailto:whrc@gfwc.org)

**Saturday, March 29, 2003, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. - *Montgomery County Women's Fair.*** Keynote Speaker: Iyanla Vanzant, Montgomery Blair High School, 51 E. University Boulevard, Silver Spring. For more information visit [www.mcwomensfair.org](http://www.mcwomensfair.org) or call 301-949-2055.

**Tuesday, April 15, 2003. *Equal Pay Day.*** For more information contact the National Committee on Pay Equity at 202-637-5232 or visit [www.feminist.com/fairpay](http://www.feminist.com/fairpay).